

**CHAPTER NO. 727**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 3397**

**By Representatives Stanley, Litz, Newton, Shepard**

**Substituted for: Senate Bill No. 3181**

**By Senators Kilby, Graves, Burks**

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, relative to criminal offenses.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-16-609, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and substituting instead the following:

Section 39-16-609. (a) It is unlawful for any person to knowingly fail to appear as directed by a lawful authority if the person:

(1) Has been lawfully issued a criminal summons pursuant to § 40-6-215;

(2) Has been lawfully commanded to appear for booking and processing pursuant to a criminal summons issued in accordance with § 40-6-215.

(3) Has been lawfully issued a citation in lieu of arrest under § 40-7-118;

(4) Has been lawfully released from custody, with or without bail, on condition of subsequent appearance at an official proceeding or penal institution at a specified time or place; or

(5) Knowingly goes into hiding to avoid prosecution or court appearance.

(b) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that:

(1) The appearance is required by a probation and parole officer as an incident of probation or parole supervision; or

(2) The person had a reasonable excuse for failure to appear at the specified time and place.

(c) Nothing in this section shall apply to witnesses.

(d) If the occasion for which the defendant's appearance is required is a misdemeanor or is a violation of subsection (a)(2), failure to appear is a Class A misdemeanor.

(e) If the occasion for which the defendant's appearance is required is a Class A misdemeanor or a felony, failure to appear is a Class E felony.

(f) Any sentence received for a violation of this section may be ordered to be served consecutively to any sentence received for the offense for which the defendant failed to appear.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

**PASSED: May 6, 2004**



**JIMMY RAIFEH, SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**



**JOHN S. WILDER  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE**

**APPROVED this 19<sup>th</sup> day of May 2004**



**PHIL BREDEBEN, GOVERNOR**